
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Marta S. Bechtol

Federal Budget & Advocacy

Last fall, the House proposed a Labor-HHS budget that does not contain a two-year advance appropriation for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The Senate's proposed Labor-HHS budget contains level funding for public media - \$535M for CPB's two-year advance appropriation and \$60M for interconnection.

Congress recessed in mid-December leaving the government funded under two Continuing Resolutions (CR). Congress reconvened in early January and agreed on topline spending levels just two weeks before the first CR is set to expire on January 19th. The CR under which CPB is funded expires on February 2, 2024.

Heather Reese and I will travel with Roy Christianson (WPRA Chair) and Reed Hall (President of the Friends of PBS Wisconsin) to Washington, D.C. at the end of February to attend the annual America's Public Television Stations' (APTS) Public Media Summit. There we will be joined by Debbie Hamlett (Milwaukee PBS) and members of her audience as we make advocacy visits to Wisconsin's congressional delegation.

The Friends of PBS Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Public Radio Association will hold their annual Advocacy Day on Wednesday, April 17 at the State Capitol. This is an off-budget year, so the message to our legislators will be a "thank you" and a reminder of public media's value to the state in terms of education, public safety and civic engagement.

Organization of State Broadcast Executives

In early January, I was selected by my peers across the country to serve a two-year term as vice chair of the Organization of State Broadcast Executives (OSBE). OSBE is a public television affinity group comprised of the chief executives of 28 statewide public television networks and 3 state network associations. The group seeks to strengthen its member organizations and influence critical issues facing the public media system by meeting periodically to discuss common interests, share best practices, and support the needs of its members.

Equity & Inclusion Annual Report

Prepared by Jennifer Dargan, December 2023

As directed by [Executive Order #59](#), ECB developed a new Equity and Inclusion Plan for 2024 - 2026. The updated document will be posted on *ecb.org* after the new year. The plan guides the activities of the Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (EIAC). Below are outlined the previous plan's goals and final updates.

E&I Plan goal: "Foster a culture of open communication and transparency that includes discussion of diversity, equity, and inclusion."

ECB is now holding quarterly agency conversations about equity and inclusion. We hosted the following this year:

- Navigating Crucial Conversations, Part 1 - 1/10/23
- Navigating Crucial Conversations, Part 2 - 6/22/23
- Wisconsin First Nations - 10/26/23
- Introduction to Neurodiversity - 12/5/23

E&I Plan goal: "Ensure all agency workspaces, technologies and requirements are accessible to employees" ECB's Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (EIAC) researched and prepared reports regarding our website accessibility and meeting room accessibility. EIAC members visited and audited our worksites which have public access to determine if they are compliant with the ADA checklist.

E&I Plan goal: "Identify and provide training on topics of bias and equity for all those participating in the recruitment process." All interview panel members attend a presentation given by the Deputy Director on the recruitment process at least once per year. The presentation includes a section on bias and equity, a video on bias in recruitment, and handouts on breaking bias habits from our first agency E&I conversation.

E&I Plan goal: "Provide opportunities and training for supervisors and managers that focus on leadership and employee development." ECB supervisors convened for six conversation sessions on leadership topics using prompts such as "What is your management style?" and "Antidotes to staff burnout." The topics and conversations are derived from the podcast of "What Great Bosses Know," hosted by Jill Geisler.

In addition to the goals outlined above, the EIAC has taken on the work of creating and conducting an annual online staff engagement survey, an in-person climate survey, and regularly reviews ECB policies with an equity lens.